I. **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**-*Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.*

Introduction/Overview

The Multimedia Oscars is an annual event that showcases technology integration, student achievement, and community collaboration. Each year, sixth, seventh and eighth graders design several multimedia projects in various subject areas. All are rubric-based, and comply with state core-content standards. Any project that has been created as part of a school course is eligible for submission to the Oscar Nominations committee. Additionally, teachers may enter student projects with students' permission. Students compete with others on their grade level and can be nominated in any of the following categories: *Best Written Content, Best Sound, Best Visual Design, Best Original Graphics*, or *Best Animation*.

The creation and submission of projects continues throughout the first three quarters of the school year. The projects are reviewed by a committee that consists of students, parents, and teachers. Judges use a rubric to critique each project. Once they have finished, the results are tallied, and three nominees for each category are announced to the school.

Our "Evening at the Oscars" is similar to the Hollywood version. Parents and students are dressed in their finest clothing. The audio-visual club, "Extreme TV", films the nominees as they walk down the red carpet. A "Joan Rivers" is selected to interview guests as they arrive. As a nominee is announced, a 15 second clip of his/her project is shown. All nominees leave with engraved Oscars. There are 14 categories over the three grade levels, and 42 statues awarded.

Program Objectives

1. Technology Integration – The primary objective of this program is to promote and showcase the integration of technology with all areas of curriculum through constructivist, problem-based projects. All projects are built upon curriculum primarily in the content areas of English, Social Studies and Science with Math and Foreign Language being targeted for larger inclusion this year. All projects must meet specific standards in order to be eligible for submission. Projects are designed as problem-based tasks so that students have a perceived need to master skills and content in order to accomplish the project. In addition, the program is aimed at teachers who are not utilizing technology in their classrooms. It provides them with ideas as well as the incentive to participate.
2. Promotion of Problem-Based, Constructivist Learning, and Higher Order Critical Thinking.
   All projects submitted for consideration must meet the following criteria:
   a. Projects must be designed utilizing a multimedia authoring software (i.e., PowerPoint, Hyperstudio) or a web authoring software (i.e., Netscape Composer, FrontPage, Dreamweaver.)
   b. Projects must be problem based; students must understand the expected outcome, but not possess all of the content knowledge or skills required for completion when they begin the project. This creates a perceived need for students to master the necessary skills and content in order to complete the project.
   c. Projects must be based upon a rubric that allows for varied acceptable levels of mastery. Students must be given the rubric at the outset of the project and be allowed to make decisions within that framework about how to proceed.
3. Promotion of Parental Involvement – Parental involvement heightens student involvement. Increased awareness of what their children are learning enables parents to participate and become a meaningful part of the child's experience. Parental support, as an outcome of this practice, encourages the further integration of technology throughout the school and the district.

2. Promotion of Student Achievement – As the students exhibit and showcase their projects in an arena beyond the classroom, they take more time and become more thoughtful and interested in their projects. They discover that long-term planning is productive.

Program Innovation

The Multi-Media Oscars is an innovative program because it encourages both students and teachers to move to a higher level of thinking and learning. Some experts describe the differences in educational technology integration as the difference between automation and transformation. This program demands transformation from a traditional educational approach to one that is student-centered, allowing for differentiation, diversity, and student ownership.

Observance of the excitement that is generated by the nominees and the "glitter" of the event motivates the students to participate in the Multi-Media Oscars. Each year there is an increased enrollment by faculty, students, and parents providing assurance that more transformational approaches to education are utilized.

Student Achievement

This program encourages achievement on several levels. The most basic is that students love computers. Computers attract them to color, sound, and animation that they use as springboards for creativity. The projects also promote excellence through a problem-based structure. As students work to achieve skills and content knowledge, they become invested in the outcome and are more willing to work toward an excellent finished product. Students can work at a comfortable level and spend time perfecting their projects. When they have met their goal, they have the option to move to the next level.

II. STANDARDS-*List the specific Core Curriculum Content Standards, including the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness standards, addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standards. Provide an example to substantiate your response.*

Core Curriculum Content Standards

The Core Curriculum Content Standards vary according to the type of project and the subject area for which it is being produced. Below is a list of Content Standards, and the projects to which they apply:

3.1 Language Arts Literacy

All Students Will Speak for a Variety of Real Purposes and Audiences - Students speak and present information in conjunction with PowerPoint (Ancient City Virtual Museum - Grade 6)

3.2 Language Arts Literacy

All Students Will Listen Actively in a Variety of Situations to Information from a Variety of Sources - Students listen to presentations in progress and give feedback to peers based on the rubric. (Ancient City Virtual Museum – Grade 6)

3.3 Language Arts Literacy

All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes. Students write both fiction and exposition using process writing and editing techniques – (Animated Story Grade 7-8, Ancient City Virtual Museum – Grade 6, Interactive Taxonomy Charts – Grade 7)

3.4 Language Arts Literacy

All students will read a variety of materials and texts with comprehension and critical analysis. Students read materials from the Internet, and Library sources to gain content knowledge for projects. (Ancient City Virtual Museum – Grade 6, Interactive Taxonomy Charts – Grade 7, Interactive Archaeological Dig – Grade 7-8, Animated Historical Battles – Grade 7-8)

3.5 Language Arts Literacy
All students will view, understand, and use nontextual visual information. Students use graphics, animation, sound, and interactivity to convey information (All projects – Grades 6-8)

6.4 Social Studies (Social History)
All students will acquire historical understanding of societal ideas and forces throughout the history of New Jersey, the United States, and the world. Students acquire this understanding by creating Virtual Museums of other cultures and time periods and by comparing mythology across cultures (Ancient City Virtual Museum – Grade 6, Early Peoples Virtual Encyclopedia – Grade 6, Animated Historical Battle – Grade 7-8, Animated Comparative Myths – Grade 6)

6.5 Social Studies (Cultures and History)
All students will acquire historical understanding of varying cultures throughout the history of New Jersey, the United States, and the world. Students acquire this understanding by creating Virtual Museums of other cultures and time periods, and by comparing mythology across cultures (Ancient City Virtual Museum – Grade 6, Early Peoples Virtual Encyclopedia – Grade 6, Animated Historical Battle – Grade 7-8, Animated Comparative Myths – Grade 6)

6.7 Social Studies (Physical Geography)
All students will acquire geographical understanding by studying the world in spatial terms. Students learn geography through studying the migrations of early humans and through the expansion of early empires (Interactive Archaeological Dig – Grade 7-8, Ancient City Virtual Museum – Grade 6, Animated Historical Battle – Grade 7- 8)

6.8 Social Studies (Human Geography)
All students will acquire geographical understanding by studying human systems in geography. Students acquire this content through the construction of projects dealing with the history of cultural expansion, wars, and the rise and fall of empires. ((Interactive Archaeological Dig – Grade 7-8, Ancient City Virtual Museum – Grade 6, Animated Historical Battle – Grade 7- 8, Early Peoples Virtual Encyclopedia – Grade 6

5.1 (Science Standard 1)
All students will learn to identify systems of interacting components and understand how their interactions combine to produce the overall behavior of the system. Students identify components and relationships of Taxonomy classifications, and Early Human Species. (Interactive Taxonomy Project – Grade 7, Interactive Archaeological Dig – Grade 7-8)

5.3 (Science Standard 3)
All students will develop an understanding of how people of various cultures have contributed to the advancement of science and technology, and how major discoveries and events have advanced science and technology. Students document advancements in the technologies of early peoples and early hominids. (Early Peoples Virtual Encyclopedia Gr. 6, Interactive Archaeological Dig Gr. 7-8)

5.4 (Science Standard 4)
All students will develop an understanding of technology as an application of scientific principles. Students understand methods used by archaeologists to determine facts and dates about early hominids. (Interactive Archaeological Dig Grade 7-8)

5.7 (Science Standard 7)
All students will investigate the diversity of life.
Students classify organisms by their internal and external characteristics. (Interactive Taxonomy Project – Grade 7)

Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards and Progress Indicators

Standard 2
All students will use information, technology, and other tools. - Students gain an understanding of computer operating environments, troubleshooting, multimedia components, and utilities through utilization of computer OS, the Internet, multimedia software, and computer utilities. (All projects)

Standard 3

All students will use critical thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving skills. - Students utilize rubrics to determine what they need to learn and how they need to go about obtaining necessary information and skills. Through problem-based tasks, they become adept at identifying a problem or need and deciding how best to solve it. (All Projects)

Standard 4

All students will demonstrate self-management skills. – Using the rubric and working with the teacher, students make determinations and decisions about which tasks to accomplish first. They have complete ownership of their work. Students who submit projects for consideration also utilize time-management skills to accomplish all requirements within the allotted time. (All Projects)

III. EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT MEASURES-*Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.*

Educational Needs of Students

This program meets the needs of students by giving them critical life-skills that will enable them to function in a culture that is becoming increasingly dependent on technology. Students become adept at using the programs and the operating environment. This leads to increased self- esteem. Teachers have seen a great deal of student-initiated work occurring both inside and outside of classrooms as a result of new skills and knowledge. Additionally, students are being engaged in a style of learning that will allow them to master the critical thinking skills necessary for independent learning and thinking as adults.

Forms of Assessment

Assessments for projects are based upon rubrics. Rubrics are given to students at the beginning of a project so the student can make decisions in conjunction with the teacher, about how to proceed. Teachers are sent a letter at the beginning of the school year reminding them about the Oscars event and outlining the requirements for project submission. The nominations committee who reviews the submissions also uses a brief rubric.

IV. REPLICATING THE PROGRAM-

Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

Replication of this program assumes two things: first, that the school wishing to participate has computers, and secondly, that the computers have some sort of multimedia authoring program like PowerPoint, or a web-page design program (Netscape Composer can be downloaded for free). Preferably, one teacher would coordinate the program and ensure that others were giving students a "multimedia option" for reports and projects. Additionally, a planning committee made up of administrators, teachers, parents, and students should be convened to implement each facet of the program. Essentially the program facets are as follows:

* September/October – Letter to teachers reminding them about the Oscars, and
* Encouraging them to offer multimedia options on reports and projects.
* November/December – Convene planning committee
* February/March – Announce submission deadline in April
* Mid April – projects are submitted, and nominations committee reviews them
* Late April – Nominees are announced
* Early May – Oscars event – winners are announced

In addition to the above, it may be necessary during the first year to conduct workshops in rubric design and informational sessions for teachers about the types of projects that are possible using multimedia.